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## OBSERVATIONS OF THE NESTING HABITS OF THE GUILLEMOTS AT BIRD ROCK.

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BY COL. N. S. GOSS, TOPEKA.

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When at "Bird Rock," Gulf of St. Lawrence, July 9th, 1880, I was informed by one of the men that had been in the employ of the "Keeper of the Light" for several years, that the Guillemots, with a narrow white line encircling the eyes and running back from same to ears ("White-eyed," as he called them), nested around the edge, and at the top of the rock, laying their eggs on the earth that had fallen down, and never on the bare rock, like the other *Lomvia arra*, nor below with them on the narrow shelf-like projections on the sides of the perpendicular cliff. I at once examined with glass from the different points I could reach from the base of the rock, and sure enough, the "white-eyed" encircled the top, and *L. Arra* the sides. I also shot over thirty from the sides, and in no case killed or started the "white-eyed." But few of these birds were nesting at the rock as compared with the thick-billed; I would think one to a hundred a fair estimate. I collected from both kinds a few fresh eggs, but most of the eggs examined were nearly ready to hatch, and among them young birds, some at least a week old. Color of the eggs of the "white-eyed" grayish white, streaked with zigzag lines of dark, reddish brown; eggs of *L. Arra*, greenish blue, thickly blotched around large end; the rest rather thinly spotted and specked with dark, reddish brown, some of the spots nearly or quite black—all without streaks, or nearly so.

In setting, the egg (one only) rests upon a bare spot in the center of the abdomen, which prevents the birds from setting close—in fact, causes them to assume a half-standing position; and as they all face the water, looking like sentinels guarding the gannets, and Kittiwake gulls that occupy the wider shelves, and with its rock back-ground, waves wildly breaking against its base, and thousands of birds circling and screaming above, forms an impressive sight, one that will never grow dim in memory.

I can find no mention of this difference in the nesting habits of the two birds. My stay (only one day) was too short to examine the rock from the base except on the sides approached, and it may be that the "white-eyed" occasionally nest on the sides of the cliffs below the top; and I write this more to call the attention of those that have visited, or that may hereafter visit the Bird Rock, and to ask in case they are so found that it be ascertained, if possible, whether the eggs in all cases are laid upon the soil collected thereon.

Should my observations prove to be the uniform nesting habits of the birds, it will be of value to zoölogists, as it will enable them to determine the kind or kinds of eggs they may have; some of the eggs will be lighter or darker

in color, and more or less thickly or thinly marked, but the narrow zigzag lines in the one case, and the almost wholly want of same upon the other kind, together with their deeper ground color, will, I think, be too apparent for doubt. In shape and measurement the eggs vary about alike, running from 3 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length, by  $1\frac{9}{10}$  to  $2\frac{5}{10}$  inches in diameter.

I will further say of the eggs examined, the "white-eyed" were very uniform in color and markings, which was not the case with *L. Arria*, and as many of the birds nesting with the latter were blacker in color and their bills smaller, I am inclined to think further examination will prove them to be the true *Lomvia Troile*, and the ones I have spoken of as the "white-eyed," be restored to their former name, *Lomvia Ringvia*, and not an individual phrase of *L. Troile* as now thought and classified.

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#### NOTES ON MELEAGRIS OCELLATA, CUVIER.

BY GEO. F. GAUMER, SANTA FÉ, NEW MEXICO.

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Head and upper part of neck destitute of feathers, and sparsely covered with short bristles. There are about twenty-four fleshy processes arranged in two rows on the front part of the neck, and about twenty more of the same kind form two rows over the head; many smaller ones are scattered over the head. At the point of union of the bill with the head, there is a long fleshy process capable of much erection and distension. Behind this the fleshy scalp is permanently elevated, so as to form a flat-topped pyramid, with its greatest length from bill to occiput. The wing is comparatively small; the seventh primary is generally the longest; this, however, varies in different individuals, from the fifth to the seventh. The tail is composed of eighteen feathers, (and not fourteen as stated by authors;) these are graduated quite evenly, and diminish successively about three-quarters of an inch.

The tarsus is long and stout; anteriorly it is covered by a double row of pentagonal scales; there is also a double row of similar ones behind; the external row extends two scales below and the internal row just to the spur. The sides have small, oblong, oval and hexagonal scales. The male is provided with a long, sharp spur, the center of which is about two inches above the sole of the foot. It stands nearly perpendicularly to the tarsus, and is directed postero-internally. In the full-grown male the spur is about two inches in length, conical, slightly compressed, and decidedly curved upwards towards the tip. All the feathers are broad, and give a peculiar scaly appearance to the bird.

General color, dark metallic emerald-green. Every feather has a conspicuous terminal fringe of the most brilliant metallic gold and bronze. On the lower part of the neck the body of the feather is emerald green; between